

SUSPICIOUS
A Chinese tale
Adapted by Carole L. Cooney

Setting: Ma Jones' house in Lone Mountain Town

Characters:

Narrator

Billy Bob

Ma Jones

Lukie

Narrator: One day, Billy Bob noticed that his favorite saw was stolen. He knew Lukie was always snooping around in the tool shed, taking away a few nails and things of that sort. Billy Bob strolled over to Ma Jones' house to do some questioning.

Billy: (knocking on the door) Ma Jones! I know you're in there since I saw you hanging the wash out back.

Ma Jones: Oh, Billy Bob! Can't a woman do her weekly chores without some fandangled interruption?

Billy: Now Ma Jones, this'll only take a minute. May I come in?

Ma Jones: Of course. Do sit yourself down while I set out some coffee.

Billy: I'm much obliged, Ma Jones. Your coffee sure smells good!

Ma Jones: Now don't start sweet talking with me. What is it you're after?

Billy: I was just in my tool shed when I spied a missing saw. Now, I know Lukie likes to wander in the tool shed. And I don't mind him taking a few nails and things like that. But for him to take my favorite saw is just too much! He deserves a good lickin' when he comes in from school. And you make sure he brings back my saw or else!

Ma Jones: All right! All right, Billy Bob. Calm yourself down. No sense getting your dander up until we question the boy. Here's your coffee and drink it slowly because Lukie should be home very shortly.

Narrator: Ma Jones sat down and joined Billy Bob for a cup of coffee.

Billy Bob: I hate to say this but, Lukie looks mighty suspicious. He's been avoiding talking to me these past few days, and that's not like him.

Ma Jones: Don't go jumping to conclusions, Billy Bob. He's just a young one and has lots of learning to do.

Narrator: Just then, Ma Jones saw Lukie running down the road with something in his hands.

Ma Jones: Look at Lukie running, Billy Bob. I wonder what he's bringing with him?

Billy Bob: It looks mighty familiar.

Narrator: As Lukie climbed up the front porch steps, Billy Bob ran out and shouted.

Billy Bob: I KNEW YOU HAD IT, LUKIE! THAT'S MY FAVORITE SAW! GIVE IT TO ME! You deserve a big lickin' for what you did.

Lukie: Please don't be mad at me, Billy Bob. I FOUND the saw in the back of your truck. Remember, your truck had a flat tire yesterday and got stuck in the road. I knew it was your favorite saw and I didn't want it to get stolen or rusty out there in the night air, just like you told me.

Billy Bob: What? You found my saw in the back of my truck? Well, I'll be!

Ma Jones: Now what do you have to say for yourself, Billy Bob? An apology is in order.

Billy Bob: Lukie, you did a good thing by taking my saw home with you. I'm sorry for getting upset and for yelling at you.

Lukie: That's okay, Billy Bob. I was happy to do it.

Billy Bob: Lukie, from now on, you can come to my tool shed any time you please. In fact, come by tomorrow after school, and I'll show you how to use this saw. Then we can build anything you set your heart on.

Lukie: Can we build a tree house, Billy Bob?

Billy Bob: Of course! We'll build us the biggest tree house in the county!